

Appl. No. 10/025,706

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-5 (Canceled).

Claim 6. (Previously presented) A method of improving the viscosity stability of a coating composition upon the addition of a colorant component, comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a base paint; and
- b) adding to said base paint, a tinting composition comprising:
 - i) at least one colorant composition; and
 - ii) from 0.05 to 15 % dry weight of at least one macromolecular compound having a hydrophobic cavity, based on the weight of said at least one colorant composition.

Claim 7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Previously presented). The method of claim 6 wherein said tinting composition further comprises from 0.05 to 15 % dry weight of an associative thickener.

Claim 9 (Canceled).

Claim 10 (Previously presented) The method according to claim 6, 8, or 9 wherein said base paint comprises at least one associative thickener selected from the group consisting of nonionic hydrophobically modified ethylene oxide urethane block copolymer, hydrophobically modified alkali soluble polymer, hydrophobically-modified cellulosic, hydrophobically-modified polyacrylamide, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 11 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 6, 8, or 9 wherein said base paint is a nonaqueous base paint.

Claim 12 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 6, 8, or 9 wherein said base paint is an aqueous base paint comprising a volatile organic compound level in the range of from zero to less than 6% by weight, based on total weight of said aqueous base paint.

Claim 13 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 12 wherein said volatile organic compound level is in the range of from zero to less than 3% by weight, based on total weight of said aqueous base paint.

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Claim 14 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 13 wherein said volatile organic compound level is in the range of from zero to less than 2% by weight, based on total weight of said aqueous base paint.

Claim 15 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 6, 8, or 9 wherein said at least one colorant composition consists essentially of:

- i) pigment or metal effect agent,
- ii) surfactant,
- iii) water, glycol, or alcohol, and
- iv) optionally, dispersant, dispersing resin, polyethylene oxide polymer, polyethylene oxide glycol, extenders, humectants, thickeners, defoamer, or biocide.

Claims 16-17 (Canceled).